

# WITH THE FARMERS

By Prof. W. F. MASSEY



**Improving Land.**  
It is not perfectly feasible to maintain and increase the fertility of the soil by growing legumes and feeding them on the place and making manure without buying any commercial fertilizer whatever. No, this is not practicable. You must maintain and increase the fertility of any land through its own producing power. Every animal raised on the place carries off the phosphorus needed to make up his bony skeleton, and that must finally lead to the exhaustion of the supply of phosphorus in the soil. You can maintain the nitrogen in the soil and increase it with the aid of the legumes and your soil may contain an inexhaustible store of potash, but it is made available by increasing the humus in the soil, but you will have to restore the phosphates either by buying them, or by buying them grown somewhere else and feeding it on the farm. This is simply buying the fertilizer in another form, and the great majority of farmers will find it more profitable to buy the phosphate on the market. Dr. Detrich's plan of growing crops and cutting and feeding in the stables will answer very well on a small farm where labor is plentiful, but cannot well be carried out on a large farm because of the great cost of labor involved. You can more easily maintain and increase the fertility of soil by keeping no stock at all, but using the manure as manure and commercial fertilizers like acid phosphate and potash, but no land will maintain its fertility by depending very much on its own power, but the exhaustion of the phosphates is sure to come about in time.

**Cotton Failing.**  
North Carolina. I have a field of gray soil, which makes good corn with an application of fertilizer, but I cannot get a good stand of cotton on it. I am obliged to use it for cotton, as any other land is in cotton and I want to know what to do to get this land grow cotton. The seed germinate well, but the plants die, not all, but great many, and I had it in cotton last year and made but half a bale an acre. Does it need lime, and what does the lime cost per ton, and what kind of cotton is best suited to this section? Any land in your section will grow cotton if worked right. Your light or heavy land needs drainage, and probably all your land needs liming. But it is evident that you are not farming in a good way, and depending too much on fertilizers for every crop. If you have read what I have been trying to impress on the farmer you will see that I have time and again said that profitable crops of corn are not made by a sole dependence on fertilizer to make the corn, but that we need a good rotation of crops that will always bring in a winter cover of clover on the land to be turned for corn. Your land is "tight" because it lacks humus or vegetable decay. Now if you get a good rotation of crops, never planting cotton after cotton, but grow plenty of peas and clover and feed the peas to stock and get manure for your land, you can grow cotton any day of it. If the heavy land is well drained, and you get organic decay into it from peas and clover you should start a good rotation at once. Plow the land that you think you must put in cotton again next year and then spread 1,000 pounds of freshly slaked lime an acre and harrow it in and let it stand till spring, and then prepare it for the cotton. It would have been much better

if you had sown crimson clover among the cotton about the first plowing. Give the cotton a good application of a home-made fertilizer of 1,200 pounds of acid phosphate, 600 pounds of cottonseed meal and 200 pounds of marl, and use 500 pounds of potash to make a ton. Use 500 pounds an acre, half in the furrows and half down the middles at planting time, for cotton roots run far and wide across the rows. Then in the fall sow crimson clover seed in the cotton, and refit a stand, spread all the manure you can make on the clover and turn it for corn in the spring, and sow peas among the corn. Cut the corn off at maturity and cure it in shocks, and then cut down the peas and make the soil fine, and drill in oats in September, giving the oats some acid phosphate.

After harvest break the oats stubble and sow peas, one bushel an acre, and cut them for hay, and sow crimson clover on the stubble and turn it for cotton in the spring, using acid phosphate and potash on the cotton, and then repeat the rotation. Get your heavy land well drained, and apply lime in each alternate round of the rotation, or every second round. The best time to apply the lime will be when turning clover for corn, after plowing. You can probably get shell lime cheaper in your section than stone lime, and should be able to get it for \$5 a ton delivered. The best early cotton I am acquainted with is the Simpkins, which you can get in Raleigh. In this county, crops you can fertilize the cotton liberally, and it will pay to do so, but feed the peas and fodder and straw, and raise manure to so on the clover for corn, and this manuring will make corn more cheaply and better than fertilizer, and will make a good crop of oats with only acid phosphate added, and it may pay better to use some acid phosphate on the corn, but not a complete mixture.

**Fertilizer for Corn Again.**  
Will the guano analyzed (1-4-7) be a good application for corn?  
In the first place, as I have often said, you do not get guano now. Guano is a natural accumulation from the excrement of birds on the rainy beach islands of South America. We do not get it now, and the goods used are more properly called fertilizers, and not guano. Now, if you read what I have just written, you will see that I do not advise the depending on a complete fertilizer mixture to make corn. It does not pay to buy a fertilizer which you can get an abundance of free from the soil, and grow plenty of peas and clover. Corn made by the use of a complete fertilizer mixture, or one containing nitrogen, costs much for the value of the crop, and if we have a mixture of clover and corn we can grow corn far more cheaply. I know at least one large farmer who claims that he makes corn at a cost of 12 cents a bushel, and I know that he makes great crops. But he never uses any fertilizer on the corn, but always has a clover sod to turn under for this crop. You cannot grow corn cheaply by depending on commercial fertilizer to make it. In the best wheat-growing sections a farmer who farms right will never need to buy any fertilizer but acid phosphate and lime, and the wheat. Millions of hard-earned dollars are spent every year by our farmers in the purchase of nitrogen, when they should buy more of it from good rotative farming. And I know many wheat farmers who have acted on this for years, and have seen their crops of wheat and corn increased while they spent less for fertilizers.

**Baking Powder as a Fertilizer.**  
A merchant writes: "I have several cases of the English Baking Powder that seem not to be fresh enough to sell to our trade, and I want to use it as a fertilizer. Will you tell me if it has any plant food value, and would it be any good in making a pasture for my cows?"  
I have seen a pasture for my cows of 750 crimson clover and Italian ryegrass, which is growing beautifully, and I am thinking that if this would be worth the trouble of making it, I could use it there. Is there anything baking powders are made of various salts, generally of bicarbonate of soda and cream of tartar in the brands. One I know is an acid phosphate, and would have some fertilizing value, but not a great amount. What the brand you name is, I cannot say, since I have no knowledge of its ingredients. The ordinary bicarbonate of soda powders would have little or no effect. It will at least do no harm to put the stuff on the clover and grass, but I rather suspect that you will see no effect from it.

**Brussels sprouts.**  
Please give me all the information you can about Brussels sprouts, whether they are grown successfully here, and at what time they will be ready for market. Brussels sprouts here and southward must be made late, for any attempt to get them early in the fall will usually result in a crop that is not as good as they should be until after frost. They should be ready for market right now, or the last of November, or early in December. The seed can be sown in June and July, and transplanted later, like cabbages, and cultivated in the same way so that the heads will grow on the stalks after the winter weather is over. They do not stand heat and drought well, and should be grown where there is some chance for keeping up the moisture in the soil by artificial means. I plant them in the July in rows two and one-half feet apart and about twenty inches apart in the rows. They need heavy manuring, as well as plenty of water. The heads are ready to gather in late November, and the plants can be lifted and packed closely in furrows and protected with pine boughs till the crop is used. But for market, they should all be gathered as soon as ready and the old stalks thrown on the compost heap.

**Organizing Farmers' Union.**  
Please advise us in regard to the method of organizing a farmers' union. Also suggest some method in regard to getting farmers together to control the price of our farm labor. What we want is a fixed price for each different piece of work that has to be done on the farm. How late can strawberries be set? You do not give your country, and I do not find your postoffice in my directory. For advice in regard to organizing a union write to J. Z. Green, organizer of North Carolina Farmers' Union, care of the Progressive Farmer, Raleigh, N. C.

As to getting farmers of any section to combine in regard to prices for farm labor, I rather fear that I cannot help you. This is a matter for the farmers to decide themselves, and it would seem to me not to be practicable to fix piece-work prices for farm work. The only way to work farm labor is by monthly wages or day work, paying a man what he is worth. I have set strawberry plants here well into December, or so long as the soil is open. If I knew where you are, I could advise better. I will take it as a favor if all my correspondents will give their county as well as their postoffice.

# News of Petersburg

The Times-Dispatch Bureau, 5 Bollingbrook Street, Photo 1183.

Petersburg, Va., December 11: A public meeting of the Chamber of Commerce will be held to-morrow evening in the interest of Southern material development and greater publicity. The principal speaker will be W. H. Massey, representing the Southern Settlement and Development organization, who will explain the objects of the organization and its importance in promoting the development of the South and of this section. Mr. Massey has spoken in other cities of the State, advocating the establishment of bureaus of agriculture and immigration.

**Public School Matters.**  
The public schools of this city will close for the holidays on December 23, to reopen on January 5. The closing will be marked by entertainments at the several schools. In the leadership of Principal Weir, of the High School, a literary and debating society is being organized, primarily as an educational enterprise, but eventually with the view of embracing the entire school system in its scope.

The \$500 appropriation asked of the Council for the establishment of public playgrounds at the schools for the children of the city, will be needed for the equipment and care of the grounds. A director or superintendent of the grounds will probably be needed. Miss Maudie Hooper, principal of the Lee School, and Miss Virginia McKenney, secretary of the Petersburg Educational Association, have come to Charlottesville to appear before the board of visitors of the University of Virginia in advocacy of the establishment of a woman's college as part of the State university system. They will cooperate with others in urging the cause.

**Heavy Sales of Tobacco.**  
Six hundred lots of bright tobacco and 700 lots of dark were sold at the warehouses in this city, and an equal amount was sold at other provisions. The planters are rushing their crops early in preparation for Christmas. The sales for the month will close on Friday of next week. Dark wrappers this week brought \$27, and many farmers realized \$25 to \$30 on their bright offerings. Sales of bright tobacco for the season now exceed 50,000 pounds. They will reach over a million pounds next week. With a greatly enlarged area in cultivation, the bright offerings next year will sum up into many millions of pounds, and the buyers will be here to take it all.

**Death in Hospital.**  
Miss Myrtle Parkinson, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. L. B. Parkinson, of Chesterfield County, died yesterday afternoon in the Petersburg Hospital. Miss Parkinson had been ill for some time, and was removed to the hospital on Monday for an operation, the only hope for her recovery. Her remains will be taken to the home of her parents in Chesterfield, where the funeral will be held to-morrow afternoon at 2 o'clock.

**Quiet Church Marriage.**  
Last evening in the Washington Street Christian Church, the Rev. George C. Zeigler officiating, Miss Mary Catherine Burger, of Stony Creek, and William H. Chauhan, of this city, were quietly married. Twenty-five invited guests witnessed the ceremony. The attendants were Miss Lula Burger, sister of the bride, as bridesmaid, and Richard Frantz as best man. The young couple will spend their honeymoon in Ohio, and will be at home to their friends here after January 1.

**A Boy's Fine Record.**  
Stanley Robinson, an eleven-year-old boy, of Brunswick, nephew of J. C. Robinson, of this city, the senior member of the firm, consigned to the Robinson-Purdy Corporation, two hogsheads of fine-cure tobacco, which were sold to-day at Calks Warehouse for \$24 and \$25 per hundred pounds. This tobacco was planted, cultivated and cured and shipped to market by Massey's tobacco company, who, during the whole season, only employed labor for three or four days. It is a splendid record, but shows what a determined Virginia boy can do.

**Competing for Prizes.**  
The students of the Chester High School are engaged in an interesting contest—writing compositions on the advantages of Chester and Chesterfield County. The citizens of the vicinity have agreed to give suitable prizes for the three best compositions. Bright tobacco, for which the land of Chesterfield is said to be well adapted, will be a subject to be treated of. It is proposed to have the best composition published with the name of the writer.

**Colored Spanish Veterans.**  
At the meeting this week of Jackson Camp, of Colored Spanish War Veterans, the following officers were elected: commander, T. C. Smithers, vice-commanders, A. Jackson and J. H. Brown; officer of the day, Joseph Lynch; sergeant of the guard, William Jones; chaplain, H. Greenway; surgeon, Dr. C. R. Alexander; adjutant, G. W. Thwaitt; quartermaster, E. T. Walker; trustees, R. Hill, H. Clarke and E. T. Walker.

**District Committee to Meet.**  
The Fourth Congressional District Democratic Committee will meet at the Chesterfield Hotel, in this city, at 1 o'clock, to-morrow afternoon, to pass upon the appeal from the decision of the city committee, as to the legality of its action in ordering a primary election for the nomination of a candidate for judge of the Hustings Court of Petersburg. The city committee subsequently, with the name of only one candidate before it, declined to endorse any one for the position, and revoked the order for a primary. The authority of the committee to order a judicial primary under the election law is the question to be passed upon by the district committee, which under the ruling of State Chairman Ellison has jurisdiction in the matter. James M. Guible, a candidate for the judgeship and who favored a primary in a letter addressed to the committee, denies its jurisdiction.

**General News Notes.**  
Mr. Duke, Legislator-elect from Norfolk, was in the city to-day in conference with friends on the political situation and in reference to matters to come before the Legislature. The negro, Jan Tampa, who was recently shot while rioting at Beams, in Dinwiddie County, is reported to be in dangerous condition at the hospital. The boys of the city are raising the premises of citizens and taking away barrels and boxes for storage, with which to kindle bonfires at Christmas.

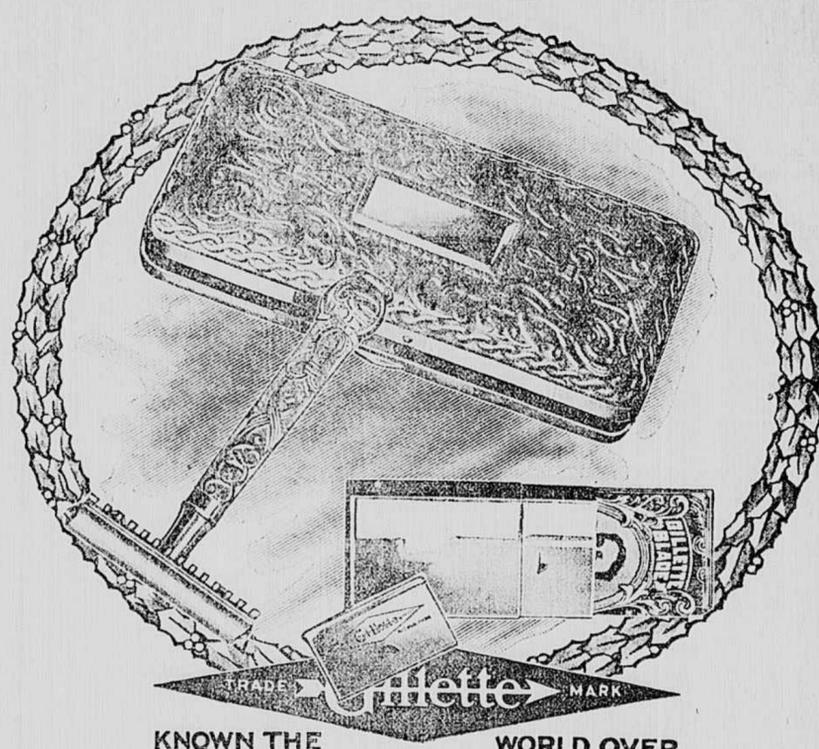
The board of directors of the Farmers' Bank, of Butterworth, Dinwiddie County, have declared a semiannual dividend of 4 per cent out of the earnings. The Rev. J. S. Brown, the new pastor of High Street Methodist Episcopal Church, will deliver an address Sunday afternoon at the First Baptist Church, before the Sunday School Union Association.

**COMPANY D WINS HONORS AT DRILL.**  
West Raleigh, N. C., December 11.—In a very interesting and closely contested competitive drill held by the companies of the A. & A. battalion Wednesday afternoon, Company D, drilled by Captain W. H. Shaw, was awarded first place by Captain Russell C. Langdon, of the United States Army. There were seven companies contesting, and the three companies making the best showing were B, C and A. Companies, these three putting up such a good exhibition that it was hard to decide between them, but Captain Langdon decided that D Company put up the best all-round drill, and gave D Company, under Captain W. H. Smith, D, B, C, third place. D Company will act as color company for the remainder of the year, and will be allowed to return to the armory first after drill in the afternoon.

The first term final examinations began to-morrow and continue until Saturday week, when the Christmas holidays will begin. The holidays will continue until January 7, which date will be registration day for the second term.

Professor J. C. McNutt returned Sunday from Chicago with a class of fifteen seniors and juniors from the Agricultural Division, where they attended the International Live Stock Show. Professor McNutt reports a very successful trip, which he thinks was very beneficial to the students in the live stock department, as they had a chance to see some of the best stock in the country.

**BIG BARN BURNED.**  
Loss of Many Horses, Cattle and Hogs to Jacob Warden.  
(Special to The Times-Dispatch.)  
Winchester, Va., December 11.—Fire probably of incendiary origin, early today destroyed a large barn on the farm of Jacob Warden, near Berryville, in Clarke County, and all contents, including six show-ring horses, twenty-two cattle, a dozen hogs, 200 bushels of wheat, great quantities of hay, straw, oats, fodder, farming machinery, harness, and 10 tons of sliver. Twenty-eight other cattle, which died through the flames, are being buried.  
The Warden Colonial mansion caught fire six times, but was finally saved. The loss is over \$10,000, with \$5,000 insurance.



**THOUGHTFUL GIRL!**  
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# THE NIGHT BEFORE CHRISTMAS



The Moral of This Cartoon Is "Do Your Shopping Early" and Save the Girl Behind the Counter and Yourself.